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To help State departments of education strengthen their relationships with the news media, two specific areas of news media relations are discussed: (1) Planning advance news coverage for education seminars, conferences, and conventions, and (2) setting up and operating a newsroom at such meetings. Specific recommendations designed to help the news liaison representative and the news reporter are made in both of these areas. (HW)

EDUCATION IS MAKING HEADLINES

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Project Public Information ■ A News Media Relations Guide by Carroll Lance

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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This is the second in a series of publications produced by **Project Public Information** to help state departments of education improve their public information services. The initial publication, **One Word Is Worth 10,000 Pictures** by Wilson Hicks, was printed in December of 1966.

This booklet was produced with funds made available under Title V of the U. S. Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Project Public Information
306 West Mifflin Street
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ED025012

Recommended
by a Respected Reporter

Education is making headlines. Newsmen are devoting more and more of their time reporting and evaluating the significant changes in education. This is a new experience for many journalists.

Working with the news media also is a new experience for many educators. They now find themselves the subject of interviews and news conferences. Some don't like it. Others tolerate it. A few appreciate this growing public interest in their activities.

To satisfy this growing interest on the part of the tax-paying public, **newsmen are obligated to search for the answers to many important questions.** What is quality education? How much will it cost? How serious is the teacher shortage? Is there an answer to outdated textbooks? Many times we seek the answers at education seminars, conferences and conventions. But reporting the results of major education meetings is not an easy task. We face many problems in **accurately** reflecting the progress made at such meetings.

This publication identifies these problems and recommends practices that will eliminate many of them. It is a **thorough** and **constructive** guide for improved news media relations. Very frankly, it is almost "too ideal." If only half the recommendations were implemented, it would be of great benefit to both education and the news media.

Any newsman facing the demanding responsibility of reporting on the critical area of education will welcome the services and facilities detailed in this publication.

Barbara Frye is one of the most respected reporters in the South. A graduate of the University of Georgia, she began her journalism career with the Atlanta bureau of **United Press** in March, 1943.

A year later she was transferred to Tallahassee, Florida, and named chief of the **United Press** capital bureau. Following the merger of **United Press** and **International News Service** in 1958, she remained as bureau chief for **United Press International.**

Dean of the Florida capital news corps with 23 years experience, Mrs. Frye is a knowledgeable and demanding reporter. She has handled news assignments ranging from peanut festivals to the visits of foreign dignitaries.

A veteran political observer, she evaluates and reports the daily activities of the governor, six cabinet members and key government officials in the nation's ninth largest state. Her probing news coverage of the Florida Legislature has won the respect of those elected to that body, the admiration of her colleagues and the gratitude of the cost-conscious taxpayer.

About the Author and His Subject

The success of any public service agency is influenced considerably by its **news media relations**—its ability to communicate with the public through newspaper, radio and television reporting. As public service agencies, state departments of education can more effectively reflect their problems, goals and accomplishments by developing a professional relationship with the news media.

Newsmen face a serious responsibility in attempting to evaluate and report the problems and progress in education. Educators face an even more serious responsibility. They have a social, ethical and professional obligation to build public understanding of and support for education. By helping the news media meet its responsibility, educators can fulfill a part of their own obligation.

This publication is designed to help state departments of education strengthen their relationship with the news media. It deals with two specific areas of news media relations: (1) planning advance news coverage for education seminars, conferences and conventions, and (2) setting up and operating a news room at such meetings.

Many of the author's recommendations were gained from interviews with newsmen who specialize in education reporting. Others were offered by veteran news media representatives whose reporting responsibilities range from the police beat to politics.

The author's comments about the operation of a news room reflect his own experiences as news room director for the 1962 national convention of the American Association of State Highway Officials in Miami Beach and the 1965 Governor's Conference on Education in Tampa, Florida.

Foreword

Carroll Lance is an experienced newspaper reporter and a specialist in the field of news media relations. He served as a correspondent for the Far East edition of **Stars and Stripes** and as a reporter for the **Florida Times-Union** (Jacksonville, Florida) before entering government service.

A graduate of the University of Florida School of Journalism, Lance served for five years as director of information for Florida's largest state agency, the highway department. He later was an administrative assistant to former Governor Haydon Burns.

He now serves as area coordinator for **Project Public Information** in the Southeast United States. In this capacity, he works as a public information consultant for departments of education in seven states and the Canal Zone.

Lance was a charter member of the Public Information Committee for the Southeastern Association of State Highway Officials, served four years on the American Association of State Highway Officials Public-Information Committee and one term on the state board of directors of the Florida Public Relations Association. He is an active member of Sigma Delta Chi, the professional journalistic society.

CARROLL LANCE

Public interest in education is escalating.

The champions and critics of education are no longer limited to an educator's professional peers.

Parents, civic clubs, service groups, state legislators and the U. S. Congress are looking into the academic **goldfish bowl** with increasing interest.

The news media recognized this trend toward public involvement in education and now treats education as another **beat.** Education is considered another area of community activity that warrants the day-to-day attention of professional journalists.

In essence, education—with all of its varied activities—has gained the status of being news.

Progressive educators welcome this growing interest on the part of the news media. They recognize their obligation to explain new programs and justify changes in curriculum, teaching methods and other significant trends in education.

Bob McHugh, managing editor of the **Columbia Record** suggests a practice that every educator should adopt. The veteran South Carolina newsman urges educators to **"be as free with your doubts as you are with your convictions."** He contends that educators "should not be afraid to admit that all is not perfection," and accurately concludes that "Everyone knows it."

The far-sighted educator realizes that quality education depends on public support and is making a sincere effort to accommodate the news media. He is anxious to assist newsmen in their effort to inform the taxpaying public about its school system.

Since education reporting is relatively new, professional journalists need—and **deserve**—help in accurately reflecting education programs.

Educators should be as free with their doubts as they are with their convictions when working with newsmen.

The Name Has Changed

Press conferences have been replaced by **news** conferences. Press secretaries now answer to the title of news secretary. Press tours are a thing of the past. News tours are now conducted. Press rooms at conventions have disappeared. News rooms replaced them.

All of these changes were brought about by the popularity—and effectiveness—of television reporting. Prior to the impact of television, all news media representatives were identified as members of **the press.** Newspaper and magazine reporters, naturally, were satisfied with this identification. Radio newsmen **reluctantly** accepted it.

Television changed this.

Television newsmen insisted **the press** appropriately identified newsmen who worked with the printed word and were extremely vocal in their contention that the term did not include members of the broadcast or electronic media.

Gradually, this argument was accepted. **The Associated Press** and **United Press International** began reporting on the President's news conference rather than his press conference. Daily newspapers and major magazines fell in line and, slowly but surely, the word **press** was swallowed up by the more inclusive term **news.**

This publication will make reference to news relations, news room, news conference, news director and news media.

As a former newspaper reporter, I reluctantly recognize the name has changed.

News Liaison Representative

The suggested practices in this booklet should be helpful to any state department of education official. However, most of the detailed recommendations are directed to **YOU**—the individual who will serve as the department's news liaison representative. You will be responsible for arranging the advance news coverage for seminars, conferences and conventions sponsored by the department of education in addition to operating the news room at these meetings.

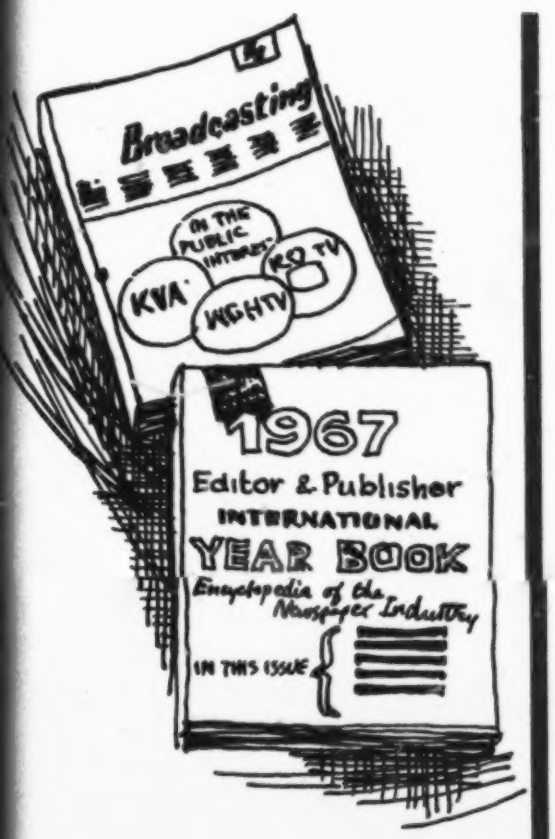
Ideally, a news liaison representative should be qualified by training and experience to anticipate the needs of the news media. State departments of education that have a public information director naturally would expect him to serve as the news liaison representative for any approaching conference or convention. Since many departments do not have a professionally-trained information specialist, the chief state school officer should select a member of his staff to serve in this capacity.

The selection of a news liaison representative is an important decision that will have a direct influence on the quality and quantity of news coverage given an education program. The individual selected to work with the news media must thrive on hard work and be a stickler for detail. Securing advance news coverage and operating a news room is a demanding task.

The news liaison representative must enjoy the confidence of the chief state school officer and his key assistants and work closely with the committee planning the conference. The news media will expect him to be intimately familiar with the conference program and provide detailed information about the planned activities.

". . . qualified by training and experience to anticipate the needs of the news media."

". . . thrive on hard work and be a stickler for detail."



News Media Personnel . . . If the news liaison representative has no previous experience in working with the news media, he should contact the newspaper, radio and television newsmen and get to know them personally.

Editor and Publisher Year Book, the encyclopedia of the newspaper industry, and **Broadcasting Year Book,** the radio and television guide, include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of almost every newspaper, radio and television station in the nation. Both of these publications group the news media by states and identify key personnel such as the editor, state editor, city editor and education editor.

Editor and Publisher Year Book can be secured by writing the Circulation Manager, **Editor and Publisher Year Book,** 850 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y., 10022. The cost is $10 a copy. **Broadcasting Year Book** costs $5 a copy and can be obtained by writing Broadcasting Publications Inc., 1735 DeSales Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., 22036. Many public libraries also subscribe to these publications.

The two major wire services, **The Associated Press** and **United Press International,** maintain news bureaus in every major city in the nation. The chief of the wire service news bureau in your state capital can provide you with the location of the other bureaus in your state and the names of the newsmen assigned to these offices. The wire services will prove invaluable in reporting education news of statewide significance.

Many of the major newspapers and some radio and television stations have newsmen permanently assigned to the state capital to report on the activities of all state agencies. Collectively, these newsmen are identified as the **capital news corps.** Since all state departments of education are located in the state capital, the news liaison representative should have no problem locating and meeting these newsmen.

Advance Planning With Program Committee

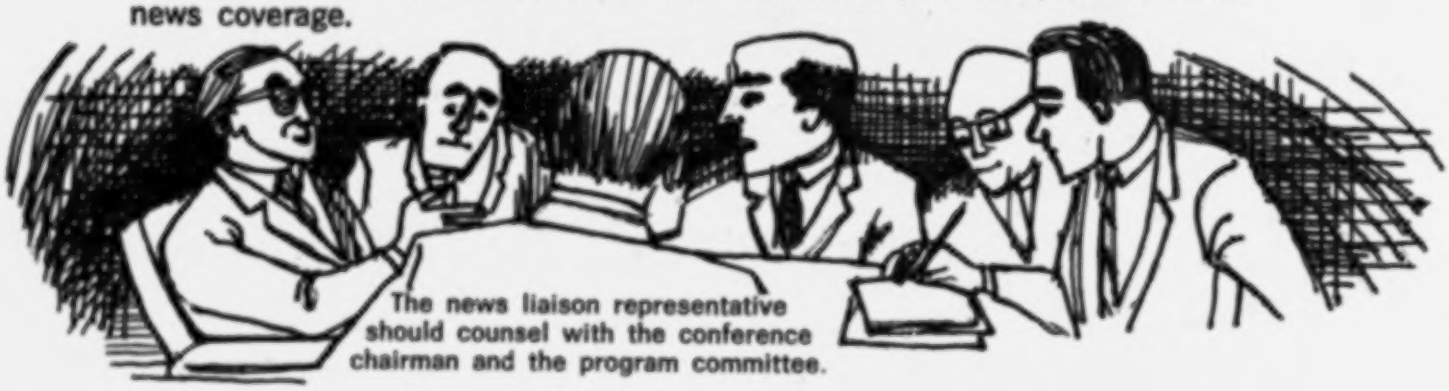
Purpose . . . Prior to any education meeting or conference that warrants news media coverage, the department of education's news liaison representative should counsel with the conference chairman and the program committee.

It is vitally important that this individual have complete knowledge of the purpose and scope of the meeting. If the meeting was called to solve a particular problem or to review progress in a specialized area of education, this should be made clear.

The nature of the conference will have a direct influence on the number of newsmen who will attend. A journalist who is concerned with higher education will have little interest in a conference devoted to changes in curriculum for elementary schools or an effort to improve bus transportation for a rural school system.

A state, regional or national convention covering several significant subjects or a meeting concerned with one major problem of widespread interest will naturally attract a larger delegation of newsmen.

Aware of the purpose of the meeting or conference and equipped with his knowledge of the news media representatives and their individual interest, the news liaison representative is in a position to plan his pre-conference news coverage.



The news liaison representative should counsel with the conference chairman and the program committee.

Remember one enduring truth—
"People Make News."

Personalities . . . In attempting to help news media representatives cover an education conference, the news liaison representative should remember one enduring truth in our ever-changing world—**people make news.**

After determining the purpose of the meeting, he must next secure from the program committee the names of outstanding educators who will participate in the conference.

Individuals who enjoy statewide, regional, national or international reputations can be expected to speak with authority. **They are the individuals the newsmen will seek out. They are the ones who will be quoted.**

Biographical information (particularly professional recognition for outstanding achievements) and photographs of these individuals should be provided the department's news liaison representative at least one week in advance of the meeting.

It is the responsibility of the program chairman to request this material when inviting well-known educators or other personalities to appear on the program. **A definite deadline should be established for forwarding this material.** A news liaison representative is severely handicapped if he attempts to secure advance news coverage without biographical information and photographs of the conference's key speakers.

While it may appear too much emphasis is being placed on the individuals who will appear on the program, experience has proved that well-known personalities invite news coverage.

The appearance of the chief state school officer at a county superintendent's conference or the presence of a Nobel Prize-winning chemist at a science meeting makes news.

Advance notice of their participation creates interest and encourages the news media to staff the conference.

An announcement that your department of education is going to host a two-day conference on health and physical education will create only passing in-

terest. However, if you reveal that the chairman of the President's Physical Fitness Program will be the keynote speaker, all of the news media will assign someone to cover the event.

Printed Program . . . A printed program is extremely valuable to any newspaper, radio or television station that plans to staff an education meeting or convention.

It serves as a guide for city editors and news directors of radio and television stations. It often determines the number of newsmen who will be assigned to cover the meeting.

City editors and news directors review the printed program to determine the sessions that appear to be the most significant.

News assignments are primarily determined by two factors, (1) **the news value or reader interest of a particular activity and** (2) **the size of the news staff.**

The key to maximum coverage for any news media is advance planning. A city editor or news director makes reporting and photography assignments as far in advance as conditions will permit. This insures adequate coverage of the most significant events.

By providing printed programs in advance of approaching conferences and conventions, the news liaison representative is performing a valuable service to the person who makes the news assignments. You are making his job easier while improving your chances of maximum news coverage.

It is possible that the opening session of your education convention may be scheduled at the same time as a public hearing on the new city budget and the dedication of a new expressway.

If you wait until the day before the convention to provide the city editor or news director with an advance copy of your program, it is doubtful if he can assign a reporter, photographer or television team to cover your meeting.

". . . key to maximum coverage . . . is advance planning."

The printed program is equally valuable to the newsmen and photographers assigned to staff your meeting. It should pinpoint the **time** and **location** of all sessions (name of building, room number, etc.), identify the program **participants** and indicate the **subject** of their discussion.

This information is critical to newsmen and photographers who are given several assignments a day. It allows them to complete their assignment at your conference or convention and continue to cover another event. It is important to remember that these newsmen face several deadlines for turning in copy, film and photographs.

Newsmen are not impressed with an elaborate four-color program printed on expensive paper if it does not contain the information they need. A mimeographed sheet that indicates the time and place of the meeting plus the names of the major speakers is far more valuable.

If you decide to include more than the bare essentials in your printed program, it is recommended that you include background material on the group, organization or department sponsoring the conference.

This is particularly helpful to newsmen if the conference is a **"first."**

Three months after **Project Public Information** was started, this federally-financed project sponsored a public information workshop for state department of education personnel.

The following introductory remarks were printed on the inside cover of the program:

"Project Public Information is a national program committed to the improvement of communications between educators and the public.

Financed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, this three-year program is designed to strengthen and expand the information services of the individual state departments of education.

The activities of **Project Public Information** are guided by a National Board of Directors that includes the chief school officer from Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, New York, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

"Newsmen . . . not impressed with an elaborate four-color program . . ."

The national headquarters is located in Madison, Wisconsin. The professional staff includes the national director and six regional coordinators.

In addition to implementing national and regional projects approved by the Board of Directors, the professional staff assists state departments of education in recruiting and training public information personnel."

Prepared Texts . . . It is common practice at large conferences for several major speeches to be scheduled simultaneously. The limited size of newspaper, radio and television news staffs makes it impossible to assign a reporter to each of these sessions. The news liaison representative has a professional obligation to provide copies of major speeches to newsmen who cannot attend.

The program chairman should be responsible for securing the prepared text from every major speaker prior to the conference. He should request copies of their speeches when he invites them to appear on the program and clearly indicate that this material must be forwarded a week before the conference begins. Securing copies of speeches in advance is not an easy task. **Few** public officials appreciate the value of providing their prepared remarks in advance of their scheduled presentation. The program chairman should explain the advantages of this practice when requesting this material. Actually, it **protects** both the speaker and the program chairman.

By committing his remarks to writing and forwarding them in advance, the speaker is guaranteed the subject of his speech will be accurately identified in the printed program. He also eliminates the possibility that he will be "misquoted" if he speaks from a prepared text. Both he and the news media will have a written record of his remarks.

Securing a copy of the prepared text in advance assures the program chairman that the speaker will direct his remarks to the subject assigned him. How many times have you attended a convention expecting to hear a well-known authority speak on a previously-announced subject only to find him commenting on a nonrelated field?

". . . professional obligation to provide copies of major speeches . . ."

". . . definite deadline should be established for forwarding this material to program chairman . . ."

Few public officals want to distribute advance copies of their speeches. Assure them their remarks will not be released prematurely.

While this may be a boring experience for the audience, it is far more damaging to the news liaison representative's relations with the news media. If you distribute a printed program indicating a national authority will discuss federal aid to education and he comments on the advantages of team teaching, the newsmen assigned to report on his remarks will be more than disappointed. They will be justifiably irritated.

The program chairman will be more successful in securing advance copies of major speeches if he assures the speaker that his remarks will not be released prematurely by the news media. He should point out that the news liaison representative will clearly indicate an appropriate **release time** when distributing copies to the newsmen. **Release time** indicates to a newsman when he can make the remarks public. If a convention speaker is scheduled to make a major address at an evening dinner or banquet the news liaison representative should type on the first page of the prepared text that the contents are "For Release After 8 p.m." on the date of the event.

Even if the speech is distributed a week in advance, the newsmen clearly understand the speaker's remarks cannot be made public until the release time indicated by the news liaison representative.

There is one serious problem in securing and distributing copies of major speeches in advance. Some speakers will not follow the text of their prepared remarks. Professor Hubert N. Alyea of Princeton omitted a major portion of his prepared remarks during the opening session of the 1966 Northwest Region Conference of the National Science Teachers Association in Boise, Idaho. In his prepared text, Dr. Alyea issued a plea for international understanding and suggested that our nation spend as much money searching for ways to reduce international tension as we spend building our military strength.

The dynamic Princeton professor delighted the 4,000 science teachers with a colorful and noisy demonstration of classroom experiments but failed to mention his concern for growing international tension. Fortunately, a member of the news room staff alerted the newsmen who were unable to attend and

were writing stories based on advance copies of his speech. The news liaison representative can provide a valuable service to the news media by assigning someone to listen to major addresses and promptly report instances when the speaker departs from his prepared text.

News Room . . . The news liaison representative's advance planning with the conference or convention chairman should include arrangements for a news room. The host department or agency can establish an enviable professional relationship with the news media by providing adequate working space and supporting facilities at the site of the meeting.

Naturally, you would not be expected to operate a news room at a one-day seminar or informal meeting with no organized program. However, the sponsor of a major education conference or convention that will attract a **large delegation** of newsmen for an **extended period** should provide space and facilities for the news media.

If the conference chairman has assigned the responsibility for allocating space to a committee, you should make your news room requirements known to this group. You should impress upon the committee that the size and location of the news room is as important as the equipment and facilities that will be housed in that space.

It is important that the committee understands the conference news room is a **home away from home** for the newsmen and should be tailored to fit their needs.

If the conference is held in an established convention center, you will probably find a **built-in** news room. If your conference committee selected a hotel that frequently hosts conventions, the management can recommend news room space that proved adequate for previous meetings.

(The size and location of the news room and a list of supporting facilities will be detailed in the section devoted to the NEWS ROOM.)

". . . size and location . . . as important as the equipment and facilities. . . ."

Advance Planning With The News Media

Personal Visit . . . The news liaison representative should visit the news media at least a week in advance of the meeting, conference or convention.

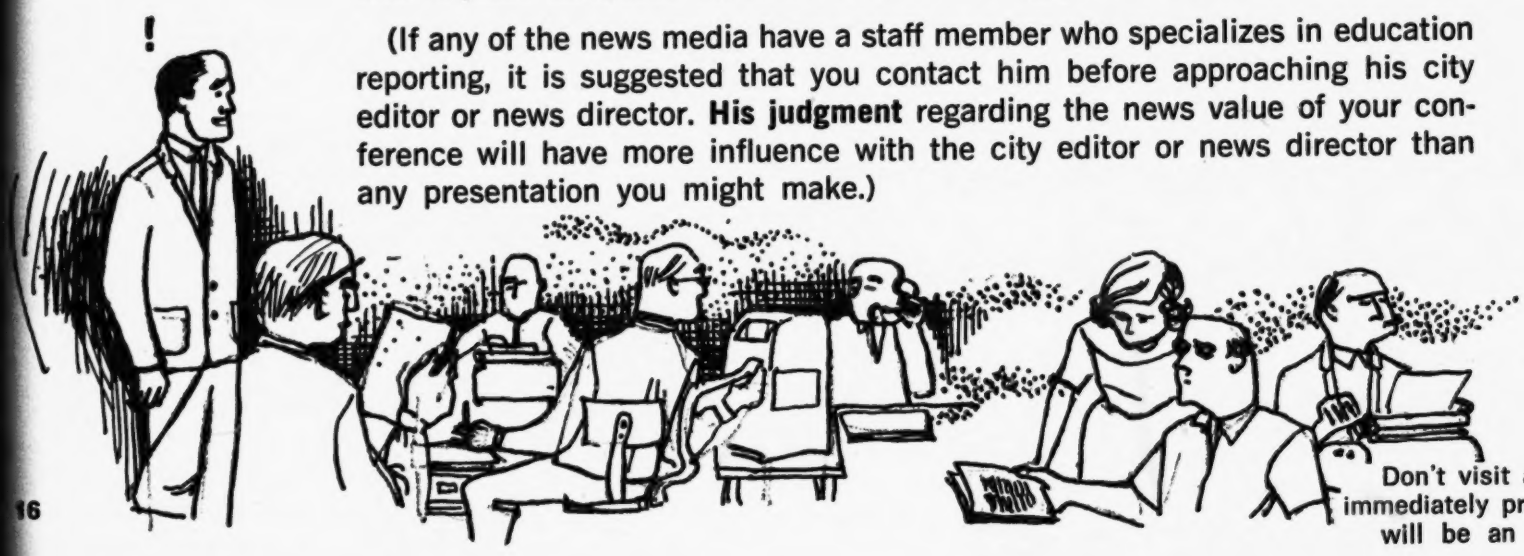
The purpose of the meeting is twofold, (1) **to discuss the "news value" of the approaching conference and** (2) **to determine the services and facilities the news media will require.**

As a courtesy to the city editor or news director, make an appointment prior to your visit. A public information specialist who arrives 30 minutes prior to a deadline or immediately before a newscast is an **unwelcome guest.**

If you are not familiar with the numerous deadlines of the various news media, find out in advance. It is important that you realize the newsroom is the nerve center of any newspaper, radio or television station.

When you call for an appointment, explain the nature of your planned visit and request adequate time to review the program in detail.

(If any of the news media have a staff member who specializes in education reporting, it is suggested that you contact him before approaching his city editor or news director. **His judgment** regarding the news value of your conference will have more influence with the city editor or news director than any presentation you might make.)



Don't visit a newspaper editor immediately prior to a deadline. You will be an unwelcome guest.

If your schedule will not permit personal visits to the news media outside your local community prior to a statewide conference, it is suggested that you invite these newspapers, radio and television stations by letter or telephone.

News Kit . . . When meeting with the city editor or news director, the news liaison representative should provide him with a complete news kit. This will include the printed program copies of major speeches received in advance plus biographical information and photographs of the key conference participants.

This same material should accompany any letter of invitation to the news media you cannot visit personally. It is particularly important that you give a news kit to the bureau chiefs of **The Associated Press** and **United Press International** and review this material with them. Since these two wire services reach every major newspaper, radio and television station in your state, they will be most valuable in securing advance news coverage for your conference.

The news kit also should include your name, the name of the conference chairman, home and office phone numbers for both of you plus the phone number of the conference news room. (The importance of the phone in the conference news room will be discussed in the section devoted to News Room Materials and Equipment.)

If the city editor or news director identifies the newsman who will be assigned to your meeting, you also should provide him with a news kit. After completing your appointment with "the boss," it is suggested that you arrange a meeting with this newsman to review the printed program and answer any questions he may pose.

As a rule, a city editor or news director will not definitely commit a particular member of his staff for an approaching activity a week in advance. He probably will schedule a reporting, photography or film assignment on his calendar and select the individual reporter, photographer or television team (newsman and camera crew) at a later date. (However, if he has a newsman on his staff who specializes in education reporting, you can logically expect that he will get the assignment.)

. . . appreciate the conditions
hat influence his decisions."

". . . many major news events
are not planned in advance."

News Assignments . . . After studying the program and reviewing the background of the key speakers, the city editor or news director will make a personal judgment about the news value of each session.

Occasionally, the news liaison representative will be asked to identify the sessions he considers the most significant. Your background with the department of education and your familiarity with the program should allow you to point out the sessions that warrant news coverage.

You will not always agree with the city editor or news director's selection of the most important sessions, and he may not, **in your opinion,** make enough news assignments to adequately report the activities at the conference.

It is important, however, that you appreciate the conditions that influence his decisions. You must remember that previously scheduled assignments plus a small news staff may limit the number of reporters, photographers and television teams he can assign to your meeting.

Few newspapers, radio or television stations can financially support a news staff large enough to provide in-depth coverage of every significant news event.

City editors and news directors perform daily "juggling acts" with their news staffs to insure maximum coverage. You must understand that many of the major news events are not planned in advance like your education conference.

A train wreck, plane crash, a financial crisis in county government or the unexpected resignation of a prominent local official require that news assignments be flexible. The **possibility** of these unexpected events prohibits a city editor or news director from committing his entire news staff to prearranged activities.

Initiative and Imagination . . . The news liaison representative can influence a city editor or news director's decisions on news assignments by using his initiative and imagination.

You should make a special effort to identify local educators and officials who will appear on the program. While their professional reputations may not rival those of the keynote speaker or visiting consultant, their participation is significant to the local news media.

Naturally, people are interested in the activities of well-known personalities but they also enjoy reading about their "friends and neighbors." The most successful newspapers, radio and television stations are those that **localize** news. They allow their readers, listeners and viewers to **identify** with events that make news.

You also should relate the purpose of the conference or convention to a local issue or problem.

If your state, county or city is faced with a teacher shortage and this problem will be discussed during the conference, you should bring this to the attention of the city editor or news director. He may want to interview the local school superintendent or a classroom teacher prior to the conference and then compare their comments and sentiments with those of the visiting delegates.

You also should tell him in advance if there are plans to honor or recognize a local or regional figure during the conference. This certainly would warrant a photography assignment and might result in a **personality profile** or feature story about the individual.

". . . identify local educators and officials who will appear on the program."

". . . relate the purpose of the conference or convention to a local issue or problem."

It may be significant to the city editor or news director that the convention is being held in his home town for the first time. If the conference was moved to your community because of unsatisfactory conditions at its former site, this should be pointed out. It could prompt an editorial encouraging local citizens to "put their best foot forward" and make the visitors feel at home.

If the mayor issues a proclamation recognizing the presence of the convention delegates or presents the "keys to the city" to the conference chairman, these activities lend themselves to photography assignments.

The arrival of the convention delegates can be treated as a pictorial or film feature if you take the initiative and work out the details with the local news media. Avoid the routine pictures of delegates registering at the convention headquarters.

During the first annual Idaho State Teachers Conference in Boise, October 20-22, 1966, the national staff of **Project Public Information** demonstrated the appeal of **something different** in reporting the arrival of delegates.

A staff member checked the bus, train and plane schedules on the eve of the convention that attracted 4,000 teachers. As a service to the two local television stations, a film feature was prepared of delegates arriving via each mode of transportation. Separate sequences were filmed for each station to avoid duplication.

While few departments of education have a staff member who can "shoot" television film, the local television stations may be receptive to producing their own film feature if you provide them with the arrival times at the various commercial transportation terminals. The idea for a pictorial feature may be equally appealing to a city editor.

". . . take the initiative and work out the details with the local news media."

The convention possibly may be the largest ever held in your community. If this is the case, you could suggest a feature story (written, taped or filmed) about the problems of preparing for this record delegation of visitors.

You also can **improve** your chances for better news coverage by assuming some of the news media's normal responsibilities. Conflicting assignments plus the limited size of his staff may prohibit a city editor from assigning both a photographer and a reporter to a major convention activity.

You could offer to **staff** this convention session with department of education personnel who have writing experience or college journalism students who could serve as reporters. While the quality of their writing may not equal that of a professional newsman, the city editor or news director would rather have a story that can be rewritten or edited than no story at all.

If your department of education has a staff photographer or funds are available to hire a professional free-lance photographer, you could offer pictorial services. If the city editor is satisfied that your photographer can provide quality pictures, he probably will agree to this arrangement. You should then ask for a list of particulars. Whom does he want in the picture? What size photograph does he want (5x7 or 8x10)? What is his deadline for photographs? Does he want unprocessed film or the developed photograph?

The pictorial service you provide a city editor will not be equally valuable to a radio or television news director. Radio relies on the **spoken word** while television gains maximum benefit from an **audio-visual** report.

While you will not be expected to record or film interviews for the broadcast media, you should recognize its reporting problems are different and make every effort to accommodate its needs. To develop a professional relationship with the news media, you must be equally conscientious in assisting each news medium.

". . . would rather have a story that can be rewritten or edited than no story at all."

". . . should recognize . . . reporting problems are different. . . ."

News Room

cate the conference news room on the first floor. Crowded elevators and newsmen with expensive equipment are not compatible.

Location . . . The news room is a **work area** for the newsmen assigned to the conference or convention.

The news media should be provided space that allows easy access to the meeting rooms but does not invite an endless line of **sightseers.** It should not be isolated from the convention activities nor located adjacent to the registration desk.

If the meeting is held in a convention center or hotel, it is recommended that the news room be located on the ground floor. If this is not possible, every effort should be made to locate the news room on the first floor (mezzanine) or in the basement if it affords a street level entrance.

Newsmen, particularly those with the broadcast media, will be moving cameras and other equipment in and out of the convention headquarters. They should not face the prospect of a crowded elevator or be forced to climb three flights of stairs to reach the news room.

Size . . . The size of the news room will be governed by the number of newsmen assigned to the conference and the news media they represent.

A meeting that attracts a large number of newspaper reporters but only a few radio and television newsmen will require less news room space than would be required for an equal number of newspaper reporters and broadcast media representatives.

The tape recorders, microphones, cameras, sound and lighting equipment used by the broadcast media naturally require more space than a newspaper reporter's pad and pencil or portable typewriter.

News Room Staff . . . The news liaison representative should serve as the news room director. Since his demanding responsibilities will prevent him from remaining in the news room during the entire convention he should

select an assistant to supervise the news room activities in his absence. Preferably, the assistant news room director should be a member of the department of education's public information staff.

It is important that the news room director or his assistant be in the news room at all times. Newsmen encounter many problems in reporting the activities at major conventions and they will rely on the news room director or his assistant for prompt assistance.

A staff photographer also should be available. As pointed out earlier, you may be called on to provide pictorial coverage for a city editor who cannot assign one of his own photographers to all the major convention activities.

If a printed report of the convention is planned, it also will be necessary for your staff photographer to provide a pictorial resume of the most significant activities in addition to photographs of the key officials and delegates.

A minimum of two typists also should be assigned to the news room. Since both of them probably will not be occupied with typing assignments, they also should assume the responsibilities of operating the reproduction equipment and answering the news room telephone.

Messenger Service . . . You should have someone to do the **legwork** inherent in the operation of a news room. It is not practical for the news room director or his assistant to leave the news room repeatedly on minor errands.

Securing messengers should present no problem. High school or college journalism students welcome the opportunity to handle these assignments as it gives them an opportunity to work in a **news-making** environment. Most journalism instructors will volunteer the services of their students if they are aware there is a need for news room messengers.

If your news media delegation includes out-of-town newsmen, you should alert **Western Union** to the need for messenger service.

". . . newsmen will rely on the news room director or his assistant for prompt assistance."

Clattering typewriters and competing voices dictate the need for separate facilities.

Western Union will either assign a messenger to the news room to collect the stories filed by the newsmen or provide you with a telephone number to call for prompt messenger service. This **Western Union** telephone number should be posted on both the news room bulletin boards so the visiting newsmen can call for **pick-up** service anytime they want to file a story. Because the newsmen operate under different deadlines, it is doubtful if a uniform **pick-up** schedule will be maintained.

Separate Facilities . . . Ideally, the news liaison representative should provide separate but adjoining news room facilities for the newspaper reporters and members of the broadcast media.

Newspaper reporters and representatives of trade publications should be located in the central news room that is equipped with typewriters and other material identified with the **printed word.**

An adjoining room should be reserved for **live, taped** or **filmed** interviews and news conferences. It should be equipped with the necessary electrical outlets and lend itself to the lighting and sound requirements of the broadcast media.

These separate—but adjoining—facilities are not designed to offer an advantage to any of the news media. They are necessary to insure quality reporting by all the news media.

It is important that you appreciate the conditions that require separate facilities.

If the news media conducted interviews, took notes, secured quotes and taped or filmed simultaneously throughout the convention, there would be no need for separate facilities.

However, much of the most significant news is not secured or reported simultaneously.

A newspaper reporter can review advance copies of major speeches by three conference delegates scheduled for simultaneous presentation and write his stories without listening to their presentation or ever seeing the speaker.

Radio and television newsmen do not enjoy this advantage. They must record or film one of the three speeches **live** and then arrange for the other two speakers to record film highlights of their comments in advance or repeat them after their formal presentation.

If the keynote speaker and the state school superintendent disagree on the subject of educational television or the role of athletics in the school program, a newspaper reporter can get significant quotes from each of them over the telephone or by talking to them in the hall or the coffee shop. He can then return to his typewriter, write his story and concentrate on another assignment.

Radio and television representatives must **set up** their equipment and be concerned with lighting and sound conditions when reporting this difference of opinion. To satisfy their audiences and compete on a professional basis with their newspaper colleagues, they must ask the keynote speaker and state school superintendent to repeat their positions to a tape recorder or in front of a camera.

Radio and television audiences do not want an announcer to **read** what the keynote speaker and the state school superintendent said. A radio audience expects to **hear** the two education authorities state their positions and television viewers want to **see** them while they are making their comments.

A radio and television newsman should not be forced to record or film these interviews with the clatter of 10 typewriters in the background. Neither should a newspaper reporter be expected to write this story (or another story) while surrounded by the cords, cables, cameras and competing voices of a dozen radio and television newsmen who are interviewing the keynote speaker and the state school superintendent.

". . . surrounded by . . .
cords, cables, cameras
and competing voices. . . ."

By providing separate facilities you can insure quality reporting by all of the news media. You allow newspaper reporters to write their copy without interfering with the broadcast media while offering the same protection to radio and television representatives.

As stated earlier, there would be no need for separate facilities if all the convention **news** resulted from joint news conferences for all the news media.

A newspaper reporter taking notes will not affect the quality of a **live, taped** or **filmed** news conference. His questions and observations are an authentic part of the reporting process. By the same token, the presence of tape recorders, microphones and television cameras during news conferences does not disturb a newspaper reporter. Neither do questions posed by the broadcast media. The answers to these questions often figure prominently in his story.

The problem of using the same room arises any time the news media are not working on the same story at the same time. Unfortunately, this is most of the time.

Materials and Equipment . . . The news room director should equip the news room to accommodate the needs of the newspaper, radio and television representatives.

Telephones . . . You should have at least three telephones; one for the newspaper reporters, one for the broadcast media and another for the news room director and his staff.

During the Governor's Conference on Education in Tampa, Florida, in March, 1965, this three-phone arrangement proved very successful. In this instance, the telephone for the broadcast media was located in the separate room provided for the radio and television newsmen. The telephones for the news room director and the newspaper reporters were in the central news room.

A newsman can't afford to stand in line for a telephone. It is important that he remain in contact with his boss.

By providing three separate telephone lines, you afford **better communications** between the newsmen assigned to the convention and their city editors or news directors. Each newsman can then give his **boss** the number assigned his medium (newspaper or broadcast) plus the number of the news room director. This doubles the chances for prompt communications.

If a city editor or news director can't reach his newsmen because the number assigned his medium is busy, he can contact the news director and have his instructions relayed or request that the call be returned.

The need for a newsman to remain in contact with his boss cannot be overemphasized. **News assignments change as conditions change.** A city editor or news director may be forced to pull his newsman away from your convention to cover the unexpected arrival of the governor or a U. S. Senator. He also may want to change previous instructions given his reporter, photographer or television team.

During the final afternoon of the Governor's Conference on Education in Florida, the U. S. Supreme Court declared the state's legislative reapportionment plan unconstitutional. Aware that Governor Haydon Burns was attending the conference, the city editors and news directors promptly contacted their newsmen assigned to the meeting and instructed them to get an **immediate** reaction from the governor.

Typewriters . . . An adequate number of typewriters also is a **must** for any news room during a two or three-day conference or convention.

It is recommended that you ask each newsman in advance if he will need a typewriter. While many veteran newspaper reporters prefer to use their portable typewriters, an equal number will want to use typewriters you provide.

". . . ask each newsman in advance if he will need a typewriter."

Contrary to what you might believe, the broadcast media also will need typewriters. Radio newsmen often write a script before reporting on convention activities. Television reporters also must forward a related script with any news report that is not **sound on film.**

In addition to an adequate number of typewriters for the news media, you should secure at least two typewriters for use by the news room director and his staff.

The **staff** typewriters will be used to type announcements and bulletins of interest to the news media, to prepare news releases for the news media not represented at the convention plus trade publications and to type "master copies" of major speeches by convention delegates.

Congressman John A. Blatnik of Minnesota, a featured speaker at the 1962 American Association of State Highway Officials convention in Miami Beach, wrote his remarks while flying from Washington, D. C. The news room director secured the handwritten speech immediately after the congressman's arrival and managed to have it typed and copies reproduced before the address was delivered.

Reproduction Equipment . . . It is important that you have the necessary equipment to reproduce copies of major speeches, policy statements and significant announcements in the news room. **Every newsman assigned to your convention expects this service.**

Your choice of reproduction equipment probably will be determined by two factors—its **availability** and the **cost.**

Most established convention centers with permanent news rooms either have such equipment installed or can obtain it on request. Hotels that frequently host conventions will rent this equipment and charge you for it.

If the conference is held in the immediate vicinity of your education department, you may choose to have the material **copied** at your department's

Availability and cost probably will determine the reproduction equipment you use

reproduction center. Unless you have secured a priority for using the reproduction equipment during the convention, this practice is not recommended. Even under these conditions it is not the most desirable arrangement.

Anytime you use reproduction equipment that is physically removed from the convention news rooms you are inviting problems.

You run the risk of the **original** copy being lost or damaged, your established priority in the reproduction center may be subject to interpretation (someone else may have a higher priority) or the material may not be returned to the news room immediately after it is reproduced.

The **time element** is most **critical** when reproducing material for the news media. To eliminate any unnecessary delays and insure prompt service, it is strongly recommended that you arrange for the reproduction equipment to be installed in the news room and be operated under the news room director's supervision.

While your decision regarding reproduction equipment will be influenced by its availability and the accompanying cost, your primary concern should be to secure the type equipment that will do the best job in a minimum amount of time.

Experience has proved that **dry copying** machines are best suited for news room use.

While the mimeograph process may prove somewhat less expensive as the volume of work increases, it has several disadvantages not identified with **dry copying** machines like those manufactured by Xerox or other national firms.

It is not necessary to **recreate** the material you want reproduced when using a **dry copying** machine. You simply **copy** the original. When using stencils or mats you must first transfer the original copy to **another form** before it can be reproduced.

The time element is most critical when reproducing material for newsmen.

This process invites the possibility of an error when **recreating** the material and, equally as important, it requires considerable more time than the **dry copying** method.

You can imagine the consequences if a typist omits a **not** or fails to identify a controversial statement with quotation marks when transferring a policy statement to a stencil or mat.

The time element, of course, is vitally important. Waiting for ink to dry or correcting smears can cause a newsman to miss a pressing deadline.

Dry copying equipment also is simple to operate. It requires little experience and no technical training. In most instances, it's simply a matter of pushing a button and waiting for the copy to pass through the machine. Either of the two typists assigned to the news room should be able to handle all reproduction assignments with ease.

Acquiring such equipment actually should not present a problem. Most national manufacturers would welcome an opportunity to offer their equipment for **demonstration** purposes.

Other Material . . . In addition to the telephones, typewriters and reproduction equipment you should provide copy paper, pencils and two bulletin boards.

Since the newspaper reporters and broadcast media will operate out of separate but adjoining rooms, it will be necessary to post bulletins and significant announcements in both areas.

Any scheduled news conferences, major changes in the printed program or messages for individual newsmen should be noted on these bulletin boards. The arrival and departure time of key convention figures also may be of interest to the news media and should be noted.

Dry copying machines are easy to operate. You simply push a button and wait for the reproductions to appear.

Conclusion

The recommendations in this publication represent desirable practices that will improve your professional relationship with the news media.

Realistically, you may not have the staff, funds or facilities to implement all of them. In this instance, you should adopt the recommendations that are **practical** to your circumstances.

Your convention headquarters may not lend itself to the advantage of separate news room facilities. You may not be able to provide separate telephones for the various news media. Your department may not have a staff photographer to provide pictorial service for the local newspaper.

However, most of the recommended practices can be implemented if you are **resourceful** and are **sincere** in your efforts to help the news media.

Newsmen are demanding. They have to be. Their bosses and the public are becoming more demanding about current and accurate reporting of education.

You cannot gain public understanding without their help. They cannot accurately reflect the significant changes in education without your help.

It's a two-way street. You can relieve some of the congestion by making a professional effort to accommodate the increasing needs of the news media.

Project Public Information is governed by a board of directors which includes the chief state school officers from seven states.

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